(b) gives an undertaking to obtain Unified Access Services Licence (UASL) as per Department of Telecommunications guidelines dated 14.12.2005 before starting telecom operations;

can bid for 3G spectrum and is eligible to participate in the auction process.

This makes the foreign companies as well as the existing domestic operators eligible to participate in the auction process. The licences would be granted through a controlled simultaneous ascending e-auction to the successful bidder.

(c) and (d) One block of 2X5 MHz in 2.1 GHz frequency band has been allotted to MTNL in Delhi and Mumbai Metro Service areas & BSNL in other service areas in the country. BSNL & MTNL will have to pay spectrum charges at a price equal to the highest bid in the respective service area.

Poor coverage of mobile connections of MTNL and BSNL

646. SHRI N. BALAGANGA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of the fact that the mobile connections of the MTNL and BSNL are having very poor coverage compared to the other private mobile services;

(b) whether any steps have been taken by Government to rectify the problems and to provide good coverage in MTNL and BSNL mobile services;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA MADHAVRAO SCINDIA): (a) No, Sir. MTNL and BSNL are not having poor coverage compared to private mobile operators.

(b) and (c) Quality of service improvement is a continuous process. Measures like antenna tilting, addition of Base Transceiver Station (BTS), upgradation of BTS & optimization of network, provision of I/O solution are under taken continuous to improve the coverage. Some important network elements like Intelligent Network (IN), Home Location Register (HLR) have been upgraded to improve the service. 78 BTS in MTNL Delhi & 29 BTS in MTNL Mumbai have being added since April 2008. Another 42 Nos. of BTS in MTNL Delhi & 100 Nos. of BTS in MTNL Mumbai are planned to be added by March 2009. to improve coverage.

In BSNL congestion has been observed in the mobile network sometimes at few places for which action has already been initiated by augmenting the mobile network capacity. The augmentation will also enhance coverage and Quality of Service. Monitoring of the network has also been strengthened to ensure performance as per the QoS parameters prescribed by TRAI.

(d) Does not arise in view of (b) & (c) above.

Black Berry services

647. DR. K. MALAISAMY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the meaning of Black Berry services;

(b) whether it is in existence in India;

(c) if so, since how long;

(d) whether it is a fact that this service is highly useful to terrorists' organizations and the Ministry of Home Affairs has objected to the issue of this service; and

(e) while so, whether it is a fact that a number of private persons have been given this service while BSNL has not been given?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA MADHAVRAO SCINDIA): (a) Black Berry is a product developed by Canadian company Research-In-Motion (RIM). Black Berry is a wireless handheld device which supports email, mobile telephone, text messaging, internet faxing, web browsing and other wireless information services.

(b) Yes, Sir, it is in existence in India.

(c) Such devices are being provided by Indian Telecom Access Providers from 3rd Qtr of 2007.

(d) While Ministry of Home Affairs has raised some security concerns it can not be assumed that this service is highly useful to terrorists' organizations.

(e) Yes, Sir.

Interest of postal services in the country

648. DR. K. MALAISAMY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that under rules, courier services for articles with 500 gms and less in weight are not permitted enabling the postal services to deal with such services;

(b) if so, whether it is also a fact that private courier services are liberally doing this kind of services which is detrimental to the interests of postal services; and

(c) the practical preventive action to ensure the interest of postal services in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA MADHAVRAO SCINDIA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Not applicable.

Review of spectrum pricing

649. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether several associations have urged to review spectrum pricing;

(b) if so, the decision taken thereon; and

(c) if no decision is taken, by when it is likely to be taken?